

## Ways to Use



# Raising a Girl: A Handbook for Newcomer Mothers and Daughters

with a Special Focus on Female Genital Cutting

## What to expect from this book

This book was created for parents and preteens who are new to the U.S. and addresses things that often come up in families raising young girls in the United States. Girls may feel more comfortable talking to an older sister, an aunt, or even a grandmother, which is just fine and the book can be used in the same way. This book focus on the healthy development of young girls and include topics such as puberty and body changes, what to expect from the doctor, fitting in with friends, female genital cutting (FGC), and ways to celebrate and mark your daughter's transition to adulthood that are healthy and culturally honorable. The topics in *Raising a Girl* have been carefully selected and designed so that mothers can work through chapters with their daughters at a time they feel is appropriate. Chapters can be printed individually and we encourage readers to engage through writing, activities and conversations. Below are some ways this handbook can be used:



### At Home

The best way to use this book is for mothers and young girls to set aside time to read through it together and talk about the topics. Openly share your opinions with one another and ask questions. This can help mothers and preteens understand each other better and strengthen their relationship. This is especially important as you transition into a new culture and as preteens, transition from childhood to womanhood. Conversation starters and questions are provided on each topic.



### As a Group

This handbook can be used in group settings as a guide to be worked through chapter by chapter. Whether led by service providers or hosted by a local group of women, this can provide a mother-daughter bonding opportunity. We encourage women and girls to gather together to speak about experiences and learn from each other.



### In Schools

The sex education curriculum in U.S. schools does not typically address FGC, so this handbook can offer newcomer students and their caretakers, especially those who may have practiced FGC in their country of origin, with more information on healthy development as well as things that often come up in families raising girls in the U.S.

The preteen years are an important time when young people start making the transition out of childhood. Young people are developing more complex relationships with friends and family while they also gain independence. Girls especially will begin to notice changes in their bodies as they go through puberty. They may also start to experience more peer pressure. Developing and maintaining healthy relationships, in and out of the home, and keeping healthy communication habits is important during this time.

For more BRYCS FGC resources visit <https://brycs.org/blog/female-genital-cutting-fgc/>.